

AGRICULTURE
NATURAL RESOURCES
SMALL BUSINESS

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0603

May 19, 2011

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The Honorable Julius Genachowski
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairman Genachowski:

I write to you regarding the Commission's plans to reform the Universal Service Fund (USF) High-Cost program and the intercarrier compensation (ICC) system. I am concerned about the direction the Commission is taking in the reform proposals contained in the recent Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM). I request that you strongly consider the proposals put forward by the Rural Associations (OPASTCO, WTA, NTCA and NECA) in response to the Commission's NPRM.

While I strongly support your effort to achieve broadband availability throughout our Nation, this cannot be the only goal of USF and ICC reform. As you know, the Telecommunications Act of 1996 requires that consumers in rural areas have access to advanced services and rates that are reasonably comparable to those available in urban areas. This means that USF and ICC reform must enable small, rural carriers to sustain and improve upon affordable broadband where it already exists in addition to encouraging deployment to unserved customers. By adopting a rural carrier-specific high-cost USF component, as outlined by the Rural Associations, it would help to stimulate fragile rural economies while also promoting broadband adoption, goals I know we both share.

I believe it is time for the Commission to reform the USF and ICC system to reflect the modern broadband world in which we live. With regards to broadband service and affordability, rural America cannot be left behind. I look forward to working with you to implement sustainable, sufficient, and predictable support systems for rural broadband providers.

Sincerely,



Scott Tipton
Member of Congress



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

JULIUS GENACHOWSKI
CHAIRMAN

November 17, 2011

The Honorable Scott Tipton
U.S. House of Representatives
218 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Tipton:

Thank you very much for your letter regarding the Commission's efforts to reform and modernize the Universal Service Fund (USF) and the intercarrier compensation system (ICC). Your thoughts and concerns were a valuable contribution to our process, and were considered as part of the Commission's deliberations.

On October 27, after many years of hard work on Capitol Hill, among the FCC's Commissioners, and by Commission staff, the Commission unanimously adopted a comprehensive Order overhauling the broken and backward-looking USF and ICC systems for the Internet age. By transitioning these programs to the Connect America Fund, we are delivering on our shared national goal of universal voice and broadband service – including universal mobile voice and broadband service – and enabling increased private sector investment in the indispensable infrastructure of the 21st century: broadband. Importantly, our reforms are fiscally responsible, eliminating waste and inefficiency, using market-based mechanisms to target support where it is needed, and putting the Fund on a firm budget.

The Commission's Order will create jobs beginning in 2012, and lay the foundation for enduring job creation, economic growth, and U.S. global competitiveness for years to come.

For your information, I am enclosing a copy of the Order's "Executive Summary." Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "J. Genachowski", is written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping initial "J".

Julius Genachowski

Enclosure